

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A card-based identification system includes one or more terminals (40) which can communicate with a database in a server. Each terminal can receive a card and includes computing means which can generate an impersonal card identifier. The terminal includes an input device (20) which can be operated by a user to input a group of characters known only to a user. The input device includes a plurality of zones (27) each of which is operable by a user to input a character. The zones are arranged so that character with which each zone is associated changes randomly each time a card is received. Also the zones (27) are arranged so that characters with which they are associated are visible only within a restricted viewing angle. The terminal creates an impersonal user identifier from the input characters and these are transmitted with the impersonal card identifier to the database for recording or comparison with stored data. The transmitted data is preferably in numeric form.